

# In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE  
OF THE MAYOR  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Penn. Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20004  
Phone: (202) 727-2980  
Fax: (202) 727-6561  
<http://dc.gov>

## Message from the Mayor

The District of Columbia government continues its efforts to respond to the ongoing problems with lead in our drinking water.

The DC Emergency Management Agency is distributing free water pitcher filtration systems to families with children under the age of 6, women who are pregnant; and mothers who are breastfeeding whose residences have lead service lines.

The DC Department of Health is providing free blood screening for the same targeted group of residents. Thankfully, blood sampling by the Department of Health does not, at this time, show cause for concern. The number of children and adults with blood lead levels in excess of 10 micrograms per deciliter is consistent with what would be expected in our city's population as a whole.

In other words, the tests are not revealing significant numbers of individuals with elevated lead levels in the blood at this time. However, we are correlating the data between elevated blood levels and the environmental conditions in the homes of those people we have tested. Specifically, we are interested in correlating individuals with elevated blood levels and homes with elevated lead levels in the water.

We are awaiting the results from the Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) for additional water tests for lead at DC schools and test data from homes and businesses that do not have lead service lines. We hope to get that information as soon as it is available—and we will get it to residents when we have it.

As we continue our efforts to respond to this situation, we have asked that the federal agencies who control the water supply and treatment operation take immediate steps to correct the problems that most experts feel have contributed to, if not caused outright, the problems we are now faced with.

The Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency must understand the urgency of this matter. They need to give the District a specific timetable for when they can correct the corrosion control issues that appear to be the source of the elevated lead content in the drinking water. I will be in touch with our federal representatives, White House officials and federal agency directors to insist on this immediate course of action.

We will also continue to provide a constant flow of information to the public. Please use the referenced sources below for more information.

- **DC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (For blood screening schedule)**  
[www.dchealth.dc.gov](http://www.dchealth.dc.gov) — (202) 671-0733
- **DC WASA (Lead hotline)**  
[www.dcwasa.com](http://www.dcwasa.com) — (202) 787-2732
- **DC GOVERNMENT (General questions)**  
[www.dc.gov](http://www.dc.gov) — (202) 727-1000



## AGENCY WEBSITES

[Office of Tax and Revenue](#)

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

[Department of Employment Services](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department](#)

[Office of Boards and Commissions](#)

[Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#)

# Legislation Introduced to Revitalize Brownfields

On March 9, I joined representatives from Capitol Hill and mayors from various cities to announce legislation proposed by Congressman Michael R. Turner (R-Ohio) that would work to develop "brownfield sites" throughout the United States.

The Environmental Protection Agency defines the term "brownfield site" as property that may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. It is my goal, and that of many of our country's legislators and leaders, to clean up and redevelop these precious urban sites.

Rep. Turner's proposed Brownfields Tax Credit Program would allocate \$1 billion in federal tax credits to states and the District of Columbia, according to population. It would provide powerful incentives to clean up brownfield sites, often property in key locations that are currently contaminated, abandoned and underutilized.

The proposed tax incentives in this legislation will promote the redevelopment efforts of individuals and developers. Primarily, this effort will spark development in areas that desperately need it. Furthermore, it will encourage targeted job creation in our neighborhoods.

Tax incentives will encourage responsible parties to come forward and initiate cleanup and remediation in advance of government enforcement. This legislation can help reduce the stigma and blight associated with the identification of a property that has environmental contamination.

Here in the District of Columbia, our Brentwood Shopping Center is an outstanding example of the revitalizing power of brownfields redevelopment. This shopping center is made up of our city's first Home Depot and a Giant Food Store that was desperately needed in the area. I'm proud to say that we transformed a once under-utilized property into a thriving retail center.

This is a tremendous example of the potential here in our city and across the United States to come together and find creative ways to revitalize brownfields.

## Community Profile

### Shirley Fearey

Shirley Fearey, age 78, has been an exemplary volunteer throughout her life. A longtime Ward 3 resident, Shirley has helped raise over a quarter of a million dollars for local charities and spent countless hours helping the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic. She was one of the original volunteers at Martha's Table in the mid-70s, and helped with the resettlement of Vietnamese refugees after the Vietnam War.

"I am convinced that volunteerism is a critically important requirement for the successful functioning of our society," Shirley said.

During her husband's 40 years in the US Foreign Service, Shirley has volunteered across the globe, including being a candy striper in Hawaii and raising scholarship money in Japan. Upon her return to Washington, Shirley helped solicit funds and recruit volunteers to run the thrift shop and complete food deliveries at Martha's Table.

"I remember a lot of children coming to Martha's Table who were hungry and in need of comfort," she said.

For the last six years, Shirley has volunteered through the OASIS tutoring program, working with second and third-graders from the Janney School every week on their reading and math skills. She joined Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic over 17 years ago as a reader of school textbooks for reading-impaired students. She served on the Board for eight years and then became the Advisory Board Chair, a position she still holds.

Last year at the Annual Benefit for the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, Shirley was the honoree in recognition of her extraordinary service and her "dedication, creativity, and profound passion." She received the Super Senior Award from the Citizens Advisory Council of IONA Senior Services in April of 2002.

Shirley is the October 2003 adult winner of the Mayor's Community Service Award, sponsored by the DC Commission on National and Community Service. If you would like to nominate a youth or adult for the monthly award, visit [www.cncs.dc.gov](http://www.cncs.dc.gov) for nomination information, or call (202) 727-9461.



Shirley Fearey



## Bank of America Groundbreaking on Rhode Island Avenue

Bank of America unveiled its new concept in retail banking at the groundbreaking of the Rhode Island Avenue banking center in Northeast on March 9. The new bank design will become the standard for more than 550 banking centers that will open nationwide by 2005—an initiative that includes significant Bank of America expansion plans in our region.



The groundbreaking was a celebration for our city. We are seeing the continued revitalization of the Brentwood area—a sign that when you put blood, sweat and tears into an idea, it becomes reality. More than three years ago, I promised to create economic development—to spread the arms of prosperity across every ward, every community, every neighborhood, and every block—from border to border, Ward 1 to Ward 8. Today, through the teamwork of the community, Bank of America and our government, we're making good on that promise.

The banking center design features will include a waiting area with television and books, magazines and other materials on personal finance, teller transaction zones, multilingual telephone banking, private customer consultation rooms, and a community center zone. The bank will be tailored to meet the needs of the community. The bank will also include a special area customized with neighborhood news and information on local businesses, one drive-up ATM and one walk-up ATM.

The Bank of America Banking Center will create about 10 new jobs in the District of Columbia.

## City Holds Historic Preservation Conference

March 10 was an "historic" day in our city. On that day, we held the first citywide historic preservation conference sponsored by the DC Office of Planning's Historic Preservation Office. The conference, held at the historic Lincoln Theatre on U Street, showcased the diversity of housing stock in the District's neighborhoods and the role historic preservation plays in the revitalization of residential districts.

The topics covered in educational sessions included: economics of housing rehabilitation, marketing of housing and historic districts, DC housing programs, living on Main Street, and the myths and realities of gentrification. Tours showcased the rich history and partnerships that have led to revitalization of Ledroit Park, U Street, and Shaw Historic Districts. What better place to hold the conference than the beautiful Lincoln Theatre in the magnificent U Street corridor? Its reopening in 1994 spawned development and restored pride in this neighborhood.

At the same time, the theater—from the exterior to the light fixtures on the interior—has the same appearance it did in its heyday. It was the center of culture on U Street then, and it is the same now. So what does this mean? It means we're preserving the history of this community while introducing modern amenities that are attracting a new generation of people.

We've got loads of new housing, restaurants and places for people to shop where they live. What we've learned along the way is that preserving buildings isn't just about retaining architecture. It's about preserving our history, our culture, our way of life and our spirit of community. In the Shaw neighborhood, our Office of Planning staff is working with residents to develop a plan encouraging new residential development that's compatible with the height of surrounding buildings.

With more than 26,000 designated properties and 26 neighborhood historic districts, our city now ranks third in the nation for the total number of historic properties protected through local preservation law. Let me assure readers that although we've got our work cut out for us, we're up to the task of preserving the fine balance between protection and progress. For more information on our historic preservation efforts, visit:

<http://planning.dc.gov>.



## Washington Gets Bicycle Friendly City Award

On March 4, I joined a group of bicyclists at the World Bank headquarters in Northwest for the International Symposium of Bicycle Friendly Cities. At the event, the District was recognized as a "Bicycle Friendly Community." We've made some strides over the past three years that are making a difference for cyclists, our residents and visitors to our city. In 2001, we hired two full time bicycle coordinators at the District's Department of Transportation.

We've installed eight miles of bike lanes, launched two major new trail projects totaling over 20 miles of trails, and installed 200 bicycle parking racks. Finally, we've spent the last year updating our bicycle plan, which had not been updated since it was created in 1975. In it, we're proposing 150 miles of bicycle routes along with more trails and bike lanes. Our goal is to finish the plan this spring. These accomplishments are good at face value, but they're really part of something bigger. Bicycling helps us achieve other city goals. For example, one of my major goals is to draw 100,000 new residents into DC.

One hundred thousand new residents will make us stronger, but not if all of them drive everywhere. As many of you know, we have some of the worst traffic in the United States. So bicycling is part of the solution for moving people—to work, school, and shopping—without a car. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of District residents bicycling to work increased by almost 90 percent. That means we're heading in the right direction.

Another important initiative in the works is the redevelopment of the Anacostia River. The Anacostia River is one of the most polluted rivers in the country, and it has almost no bicycle access. But we believe the Anacostia holds the key to the city's future. An important piece of our redevelopment efforts is what we call the "Riverwalk." This bike trail will run the entire length of the Anacostia River, connecting homes, parks, restaurants and shops.

Finally, bicycling will help us face our public safety challenges in the city. In one of our city parks, known as Watts Branch, we're working with a community group to clean up the stream, the park, and the bike trail. This group came in two years ago and began clearing a paved trail so people could actually use it. Next year, we will break ground on a million dollar improvement to the Watts Branch Trail.

## City Establishes Advisory Commission on Caribbean Affairs

On March 3, I was pleased to launch a new advisory commission on Caribbean affairs. The Commission will advise me on issues and foster enhanced relationships between the District of Columbia and nations of the Caribbean, including communities of individuals from nations in the Caribbean who live in the District of Columbia.

Each member of the commission takes on an additional challenge and makes a personal decision to serve the District government and the residents in the District. They will also serve the nations and communities to which each of them holds close traditional, spiritual, educational, or cultural bonds. This Commission will advise the District government on matters that are designed to strengthen and enhance the educational, spiritual, social, cultural, tourism, and economic bonds between the District and nations in the Caribbean.

I look forward to discussions on issues such as economic development partnerships and collaborations between business communities. One of the important functions of the committee will be enhancing relationships and collaboration between the District government and the diplomatic community.

The members of this commission are:

### **Name**

Chris G. Garner, Chairman  
Herlande Rosemond, Esquire  
Emanuel Finn  
Emile McKale Webster  
Finiana Sharon Joseph  
Ralph J. Belton  
Myrtal Rosalind Gomez  
Denys Hamilton Vaughn-Cooke  
Acklyn R. Lynch, PhD.  
Neil Albert  
Angela Natal Manso  
Moses D.J. Nunez  
Bertram Lloyd Melbourne, PhD.  
Elizabeth Stanley, Esquire  
Patricia A. Roberts

### **National Affiliation**

Turks & Caicos Islands  
Republic of Haiti  
Dominica  
Republic of Guyana  
St. Lucia  
Grenada  
Bahamas  
Republic of Guyana  
Trinidad and Tobago  
Republic of Guyana  
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico  
Dominican Republic  
Jamaica  
United States Virgin Islands  
Republic Of Haiti



## Mayor's Week in Review

### Mayor Attends National League of Cities Events

On **March 6, 7 and 8**, I attended and delivered remarks at various events connected with the National League of Cities Congressional Cities Conference. We discussed the challenges facing cities and towns across the United States, and how to improve our relationships with the federal government.

### Mayor Participates in Everybody WINS! DC Salute to Literacy

On **March 9**, I attended the Everybody WINS! DC Salute to Literacy and read a few passages of a book to Curtis Smith, a sixth-grader.

### Mayor Gives Remarks at Urban League Gala

On **March 10**, I delivered remarks about civic engagement at the Greater Washington Urban League's Whitney M. Young Jr. Memorial Gala held at the Marriott Wardman Park in Northwest.

### Mayor Delivers "First Joke" at Comedy Event

On **March 10**, I delivered the ceremonial "first joke" at the "Funniest Celebrity in Washington" benefit event, held at the Galleria at Lafayette Square in Northwest.

### Mayor Stops by *The Service Set*

On **March 11**, I dropped by the set of *The Service*, an ABC Television pilot show that was filming at the John A. Wilson Building at 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW.

Mayor Convenes Community Meeting on Lead in the District's Drinking Water

On **March 16**, I chaired a community meeting at Shiloh Baptist Church on the issue of lead in the city's drinking water.

## Upcoming Family Health Fair

Let me take a moment to remind all of our readers about the upcoming "What About the Children Family Health Fair" for District of Columbia Public Schools children and their parents. The purpose of the Health Fair is to have professionals provide advice, materials and health screening to the community. We believe it is important to provide information concerning healthy living to parents to help create a healthy lifestyle for their family.

The "What About the Children Family Health Fair" will be held:

- Saturday, April 3, 2004  
10 am - 4 pm  
Davis Elementary School  
4430 H Street, SE

For more information, call (202) 635-7600.





## District Activities



Mayor Williams and DC WASA Board Chair Glenn S. Gerstell announced March 4 the Brita Products Company donated 10,000 water filtration pitchers for District families with children under 6 or pregnant or breastfeeding women living in areas with lead service lines.



Mayor Williams, Council Chair Linda Cropp, Councilmembers Vincent Orange (Ward 5), Sandy Allen (Ward 8), Chief Technology Officer Suzanne Peck, and ANC 8C Chair Mary Cuthbert broke ground on the new Unified Communications Center on St. Elizabeths Hospital grounds on March 4.



Mayor Williams toured the "DC Builds Anacostia Waterfront Exhibit" at the National Building Museum March 10 with Rep. Kay Granger (R-Texas) and renowned architect Bing Thom of Vancouver, Canada.

## Community News

- [Mayor Williams Directs WASA To Ship Water Filters to Affected Homes](#)
- [DPR Hosts Table Tennis Olympic Trials](#)
- [P&G Donates Pitcher and Faucet Water Filters for Homes with Lead Service Pipes](#)

[View all News Releases](#)

## Upcoming Events

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>4/03</b> | <b>What about the Children Family Health Fair</b><br>10 am - 4 pm<br>Davis Elementary School<br>4430 H Street, SE  |
| <b>4/03</b> | <b>National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade</b><br>10 am<br>Beginning at Constitution Avenue and 7th Street, NW<br>For more information, visit <a href="http://www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org">www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org</a> |
| <b>4/03</b> | <b>Taking Poetry to the Streets</b><br>11 am - 4 pm<br>G Street between 9th and 10th Streets, NW<br>For more information call the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library at (202) 727-1101   |
| <b>4/16</b> | <b>DC Emancipation Day Parade and Celebration</b><br>10 am - 9:30 pm<br>Parade begins at Constitution Avenue and 7th Street, NW<br>For more information, call (202) 727-6306   |

